

BOOK REVIEW

Romain Tiquet. *Travail forcé et mobilisation de la main-d'œuvre au Sénégal: Années 1920–1960*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2019. 288 pp. Illustrations. Maps. Tables. Sources. Bibliography. €26.00. Paper. ISBN: 9782753576100

Travail forcé is an innovative study of the articulation of state power through the lens of forced labor in twentieth-century Senegal. Romain Tiquet commits to a new chronology of coerced and compelled work that begins in the post-WWI era, extends beyond the Lamine Guèye Law (1946), and continues into 1960s Senegal. The book identifies forced labor as a colonial innovation in domination and centers it within a discursive analysis of colonial and postcolonial governmentality. Compulsory labor was an apparatus of colonial governance and an integral repertoire within two related technologies of modernization—state development and human development. Tiquet shows how the colonial state's expansion and reproduction (via infrastructure, bureaucracies, and commodity production) worked with the state's promotion of ideals that included obligation, civic duty, and discipline to justify forced labor schemes.

In his analysis of forced labor, Tiquet argues for a reconsideration of place, space, and scale. His text grounds the history of forced labor in eastern and southern rural Senegal, which adds breadth to a twentieth-century historiography that generally attends to the coastal urban centers. *Travail forcé* conceptualizes Senegal and Senegalese as flexible, unfixed categories of geography and identity to account for long-distance migrant labor schemes operating in and beyond Senegal. Tiquet nimbly attends to the multi-dimensional and relational operation of power, scaling from village to international organizations. This history results from a close examination of the colonial archive and is informed by interviews conducted in the regions of Tambacounda and Ziguinchor.

In thematically organized chapters, Tiquet historicizes the resilience of forced labor—annual obligatory labor known as “sweat taxation,” the second portion, or militarily conscripted civilian labor, penal labor, and state-requisitioned labor for private enterprise—during an era in which the International Labor Organization (ILO) strove to protect colonial populations from labor exploitation. The first two chapters use road construction and sisal

© The Author(s), 2021. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of the African Studies Association.

This article has been updated since its original publication. See <https://doi.org/10.1017/asr.2021.119>.

plantations to map the evolution of forced labor from provisional to permanent systems. Featuring workers produced by district chiefs and mobile penal camps, these chapters reveal the tightly bound relationship between taxation and coerced work, as well as the emergence of a colonial language that tethered forced labor to civic duty and moral obligation.

Chapters Three and Five analyze colonial systems that regularly produced coerced labor—the canton chief system and the colonial military’s *deuxième portion*, or second portion. In the first, Tiquet uses the concept of decentralized despots to highlight how colonial statecraft operated through appointed chiefs whose arbitrary power could reduce their accountability to colonial administrators and rural populations. The infamous *deuxième portion* was made up of men conscripted into the military, designated as noncombatants, and then retained within French West Africa (FWA) in labor camps. Colonial and military authorities promoted the *deuxième portion* as a means to educate, discipline, and control West Africans. In Chapter Four, Tiquet highlights everyday resistance to and within labor schemes in order to portray modalities of resistance that were relational and fluid, which allowed workers to situationally respond to violent oppression, as well as to mitigate retaliation.

Chapter Six successfully carries an analysis of forced labor in rural colonial Senegal into the independent period. Preoccupied with rapid development, socialism, nationalization, and the mobilization of the large youth population, political elites in independent Senegal redefined work as liberating and emancipatory. They modified the colonial discourse of labor mobilization, which featured moral obligation and discipline, to include nationalistic values. The rural “animation” campaigns of the 1960s championed volunteerism and channeled young Senegalese men into work farms. This chapter neatly demonstrates that the discourses surrounding state development and human development in independent Senegal were new, yet contingent upon colonial epistemologies of forced labor.

This is a thoroughly enjoyable read and a timely update on labor history in West Africa. Without explicitly foregrounding gender, Tiquet depicts the masculinization of work, as well as the absence or marginalization of women in colonial and postcolonial labor schemes in Senegal. This text could have better highlighted race, as the colonial discourses of work, idleness, and obligation in Africa have a racialized history. Despite these minor criticisms, *Travail forcé* makes significant advances in the study of power and labor in French West Africa, Senegal, and beyond.

Sarah J. Zimmerman 

Western Washington University
Bellingham, Washington

sarah.zimmerman@wwu.edu

doi:10.1017/asr.2021.3

For additional reading on this subject, the ASR recommends:

- Freund, Bill. 1984. "Labor and Labor History in Africa: A Review of the Literature." *African Studies Review* 27 (2): 1–58. doi:10.2307/524115.
- Keese, Alexander. 2015. "Why Stay? Forced Labor, the Correia Report, and Portuguese–South African Competition at the Angola–Namibia Border, 1917–1939." *History in Africa* 42: 75–108. doi:10.1017/hia.2015.20.